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Byron

Cecil Aldin's merry party

THE CENTRAL CHILDREN'S ROOM  
DONNELLY CENTER  
20 WEST 100 STREET  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019





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# CECIL ALDIN'S MERRY PARTY

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

CECIL ALDIN'S  
HAPPY FAMILY

Many Illustrations in Colour and  
Black-and-White

Letterpress by MAY BYRON

# CECIL ALDIN'S MERRY PARTY

*Containing an account of*

Forager's Hunt Breakfast

Rags' Garden Party

Master Quack's Water Picnic

Tabitha's Tea Party

Peter's Dinner Party

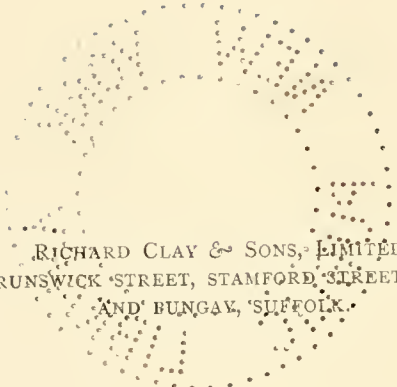
AND

Humpty and Dumpty's Fancy Dress Ball

*Told by MAY BYRON and Illustrated with many Full-Page  
Pictures in Colour*

LONDON  
HENRY FROWDE  
HODDER & STOUGHTON

1913



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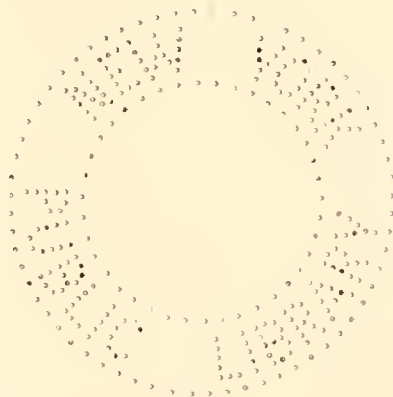
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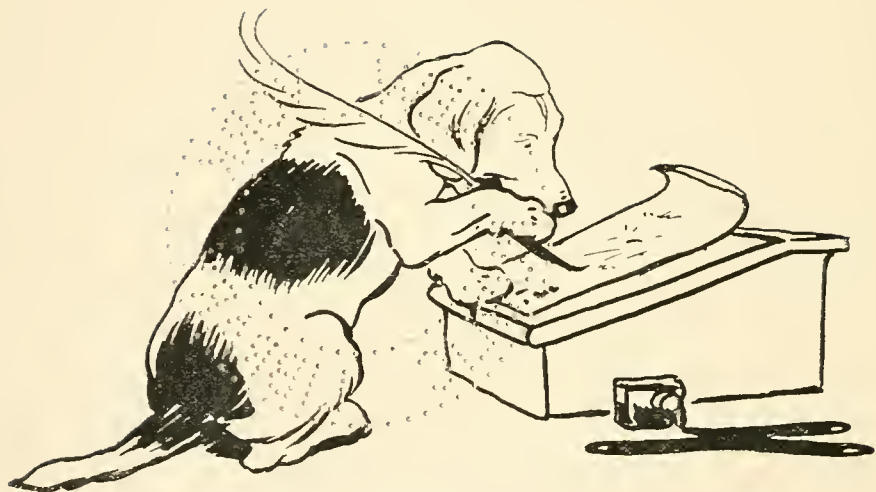
ASTOR LENOX AND  
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

O

L

# A-HUNTING WE WILL GO





"HE SAT HIMSELF DOWN AT HIS DESK"

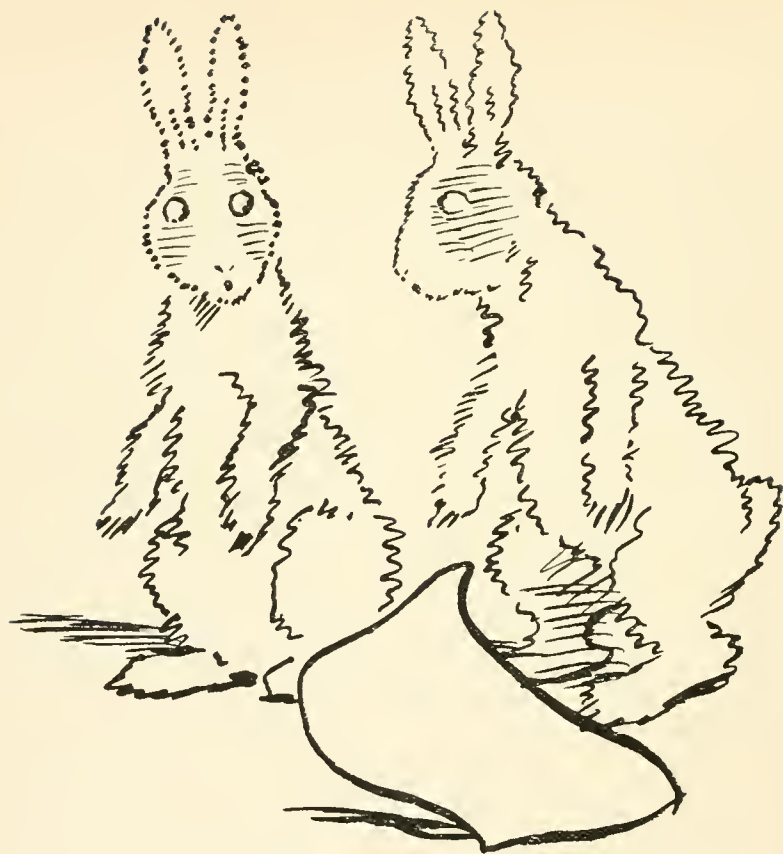
THE hunting season had begun, ∞ and the days were bright and clear, ∞ when Forager said, “ Let’s have some fun ∞ that will suit this time of the year. ∞ A jolly Hunt Breakfast to all my friends ∞ is the sort of affair I propose. ∞ A gentleman never cares what he spends ∞ on big entertainments like those. ∞ Now, sometimes people don’t want to eat, ∞ they are not hungry, indeed, ∞ if they get their breakfast before the Meet. ∞ To see them properly feed, ∞ the breakfast must happen at luncheon-time, ∞ and last till it’s time for tea. ∞ And oh, I intend it shall be prime ! ” ∞ said Forager, shouting with glee. ∞ So he sat himself down at his desk, and penned, ∞ in his boldest, dashingest style, ∞ an invitation to every friend ∞ who lived within half a mile.

When Forager's letter next day was received ∞ by Rags, he was mad with pleasure. ∞ "It's really too jolly to be believed!" ∞ he cried as he read it at leisure. ∞ "I wouldn't miss it on any account: ∞ it's a most unexpected treat. ∞ The bother is, I must find a mount, ∞ or how shall I go to the Meet?"





# DOUBTS AND FEARS



"INSTEAD OF HUNTING, WE MIGHT GET HUNTED"

Though Forager worded his letter so nicely ∘ it didn't exactly strike ∘ all his neighbours as being precisely ∘ the kind of a party they'd like. ∘ Tabitha merely shrugged her shoulder, ∘ and said, with another shrug, ∘ "When Forager gets a little bit older, ∘ he'll know one prefers to stay snug ∘ by one's own fireside, to such gallivanting !" ∘ And Humpty and Dumpty, they ∘ huddled together, alarmed and panting, ∘ and whispered, "What shall we say ?" ∘ They never before had been confronted ∘ with a puzzle like that. They thought, ∘ "Instead of hunting, we might get hunted,— ∘ oh, gracious ! we might get caught !" ∘ So they sent a very polite little letter, ∘ regretting in all sorts of ways ∘ they couldn't accept, but they thought they had better ∘ stay home, these changeable days.

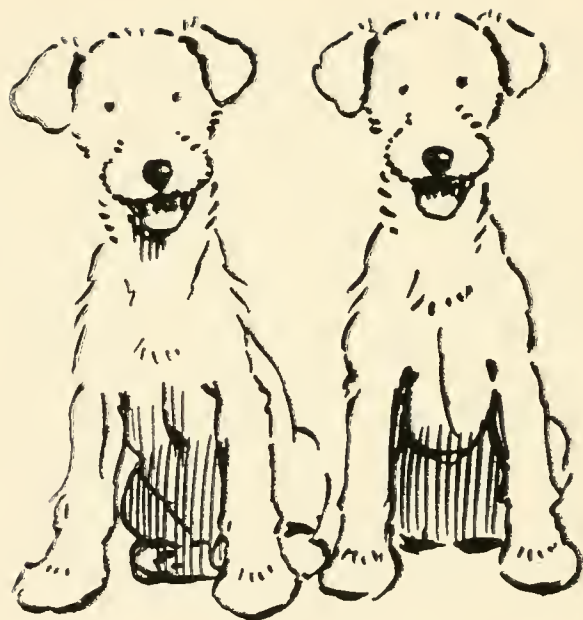




Cecil  
LADIN



# MOUNTS FOR THE MEET

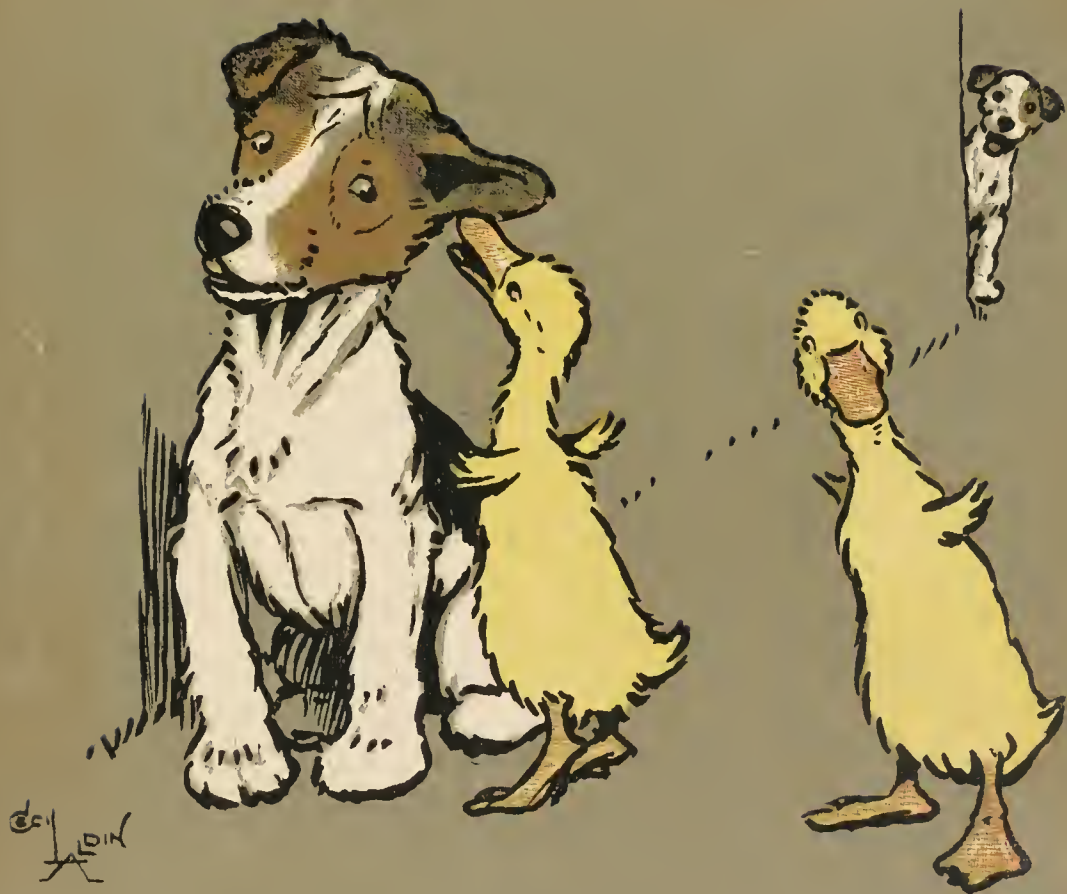


BOES AND TOGO

## III

Nothing could scare the Quacks, however ;  
◊ they were awfully plucky, those two. ◊  
They made up a plan that was rather clever.  
◊ They went to some twins they knew, ◊  
Bobs and Togo—just like each other— ◊  
and said, with an artful air, ◊ “ Will you let  
us ride on you and your brother ◊ to Forager’s  
Hunt affair ? ◊ We are both of us very light  
weights, you know, ◊ we really scarce  
weigh a feather ; ◊ and as, no doubt, you  
are meaning to go, ◊ ’twould be nice if we all  
went together ! ” ◊ Bobs and Togo were  
taken aback ◊ at this cool composed request ; ◊  
but each of them answered, “ Well, Master  
Quack, ◊ no doubt your plan would be  
best.”







# THE ROUGH RIDERS



THE QUACKS AS HUNTSMEN

But Bobs and Togo, poor simple chaps, ∞ soon found they were quite the prey ∞ of the Quacks, who, attired in huntsman's caps, ∞ came practising every day. ∞ They were made to gallop, to canter, to trot, ∞ they were pulled up sharp with a jerk. ∞ They gasped, "We are getting most fearfully hot!"— ∞ they groaned, "This is very hard work!" ∞ But the Quacks were yelling, "Get on! Tally-ho! ∞ Tantivy! Gee-up! Look slick!" ∞ And they kicked their steeds when they went too slow, ∞ and choked them for going too quick. ∞ "It's excellent practice!" they kept on crying, ∞ "why do you make such a fuss? ∞ It's just as good, there is no denying, ∞ for you as it is for us!"



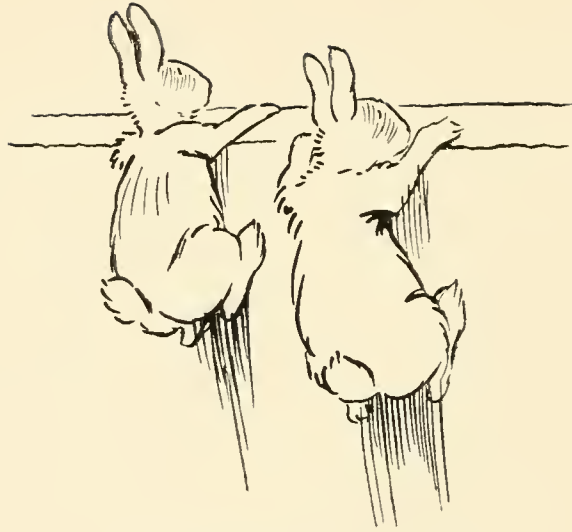


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# A SMART TURN=OUT

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"THEY KEPT QUITE OUT OF THE WAY"

But Peter, who was extremely wise, ∞ was keeping his movements dark. ∞ He was taking daily exercise, ∞ and riding out in the Park, ∞ on Billy, a friend he long had known. ∞ At length he appeared on the scene ∞ on the day of the Meet, in a coat of his own, ∞ of the smartest, huntingest green. ∞ Forager, M. F. H., was ready : ∞ he sat, with a smiling face, ∞ mounted well on his comrade Neddy, ∞ the picture of health and grace.

Then the Quacks rode up at a spanking rate, ∞ with Bobs and Togo quite gay. ∞ They chortled, “It never will do to be late, ∞ for this is our hunting day !” ∞ And this is a secret,—whisper low ! ∞ The Humpties who didn’t accept, ∞ because they couldn’t a-hunting go, ∞ turned up all the same, though they kept ∞ quite out the

way ; and Tabitha, she ∞ took a peep from  
a safe retreat. ∞ They were so dreadfully  
anxious to see ∞ this noble and glorious  
Meet ! ∞









# GALLANT AND GAY



"A FINE OLD ENGLISH SQUIRE"

The newspapers said that the Meet, which was splendid, ∞ took place at Bramblewood Bank. ∞ They added that it “was largely attended ∞ by the height of our fashion and rank.” ∞ They also gave the whole of the run : ∞ you can read it yourself if you choose ; ∞ you’ve only to buy a “Mudshire Sun,” ∞ or a copy of “Farmyard News.” ∞ The breakfast, however, they couldn’t describe : ∞ it was much too rich and too rare. ∞ All our friends, the whole of the tribe, ∞ were gaily assembled there, ∞ including Humpty and Dumpty, both, ∞ and Tabitha, who had been ∞ (no wonder !) feeling extremely loth ∞ to be absent from such a scene. ∞ Forager looked so portly and proud, ∞ like a fine old English squire, ∞ as with courtly manner he asked the crowd, ∞ “Have you everything you

require?" ∞ From venison pasty to fillet of veal, oh, how the table was laid ! ∞ That Breakfast was the heartiest meal ∞ that ever a huntsman made !



# INVITATIONS



"THEY WASHED THEIR SOMEWHAT ELDERLY DUCKS"

WHEN the summer was just about half-way through, ∞ and the strawberries just full in, ∞ “I know of a spiffing thing to do!” ∞ said Rags to himself with a grin. ∞ “A garden-party! Cream buns, and fruits, ∞ plenty of iced lemonade, ∞ all the guests in their lightest suits, ∞ and tennis-courts properly laid.” ∞ And he left a note at everyone’s door, ∞ to say, “Sir, Madam, or Miss, ∞ excuse my not having written before, ∞ and such very short notice as this; ∞ but I am At Home to-morrow at three. ∞ There’ll be Chinese lanterns and flags, ∞ tennis, bowls, and a scrumptious tea. ∞ Do come! Yours sincerely, RAGS.”

The Master Quacks were wild with delight. ∞ They bought a packet of Lux, ∞ and washed exceedingly clean and white ∞ their

somewhat elderly ducks. ∞ They mended their gaudy tennis-jackets, ∞ which were not much the worse for wear, ∞ and with elegant hats and up-to-date rackets, ∞ they did look a handsome pair !



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H. J. W. H. W.



# SUMMER FASHIONS



"A NEW HOBLE GOWN"

Humpty and Dumpty had just been buying ∘ each a new hobble gown. ∘ Of course, in those it is no use trying ∘ tennis—you'd tumble down. ∘ They couldn't help wishing the skirts were wider; ∘ but still it was nice to feel ∘ both Humpty, and Dumpty walking beside her, ∘ were stylish from head to heel. ∘ They could just sit down ; but they chose a seat ∘ as near as they could to the table, ∘ which was covered with beautiful things to eat ; ∘ and they luckily found they were able ∘ to stow away quite a lot of these, ∘ in their mouths and their vanity bags. ∘ “Oh, thanks, I will !” and “Yes, if you please !” ∘ they said every minute to Rags.





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A. L. DIN



# A MISFIT



"PETER'S TROUSERS WERE DREADFULLY SHRUNK"

Peter's trousers—grey flannels they were—  
∞ were dreadfully shrunk, he found. ∞ “Yet I  
cannot afford another pair,” ∞ he said as he  
turned them round. ∞ However, he managed  
to let them out, ∞ but they still were decidedly  
small. ∞ “I must take care how I jump or  
shout, ∞ and mind that I do not fall,” ∞ said  
Peter. “My cricketing shirt and shoes, ∞  
they only were new this year ; ∞ but I must  
be careful how I use ∞ these trousers—that’s  
very clear. ∞ Tennis I shan’t attempt to  
play,— ∞ certainly not in these bags. ∞ I  
must stand about in a graceful way,— ∞ I’ll  
try and explain to Rags.”

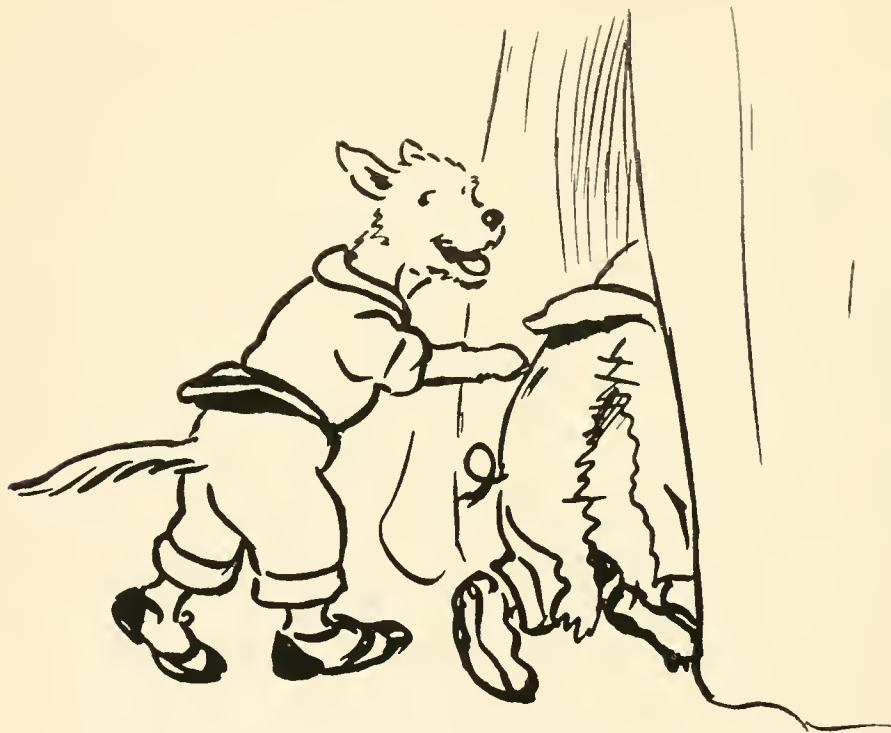




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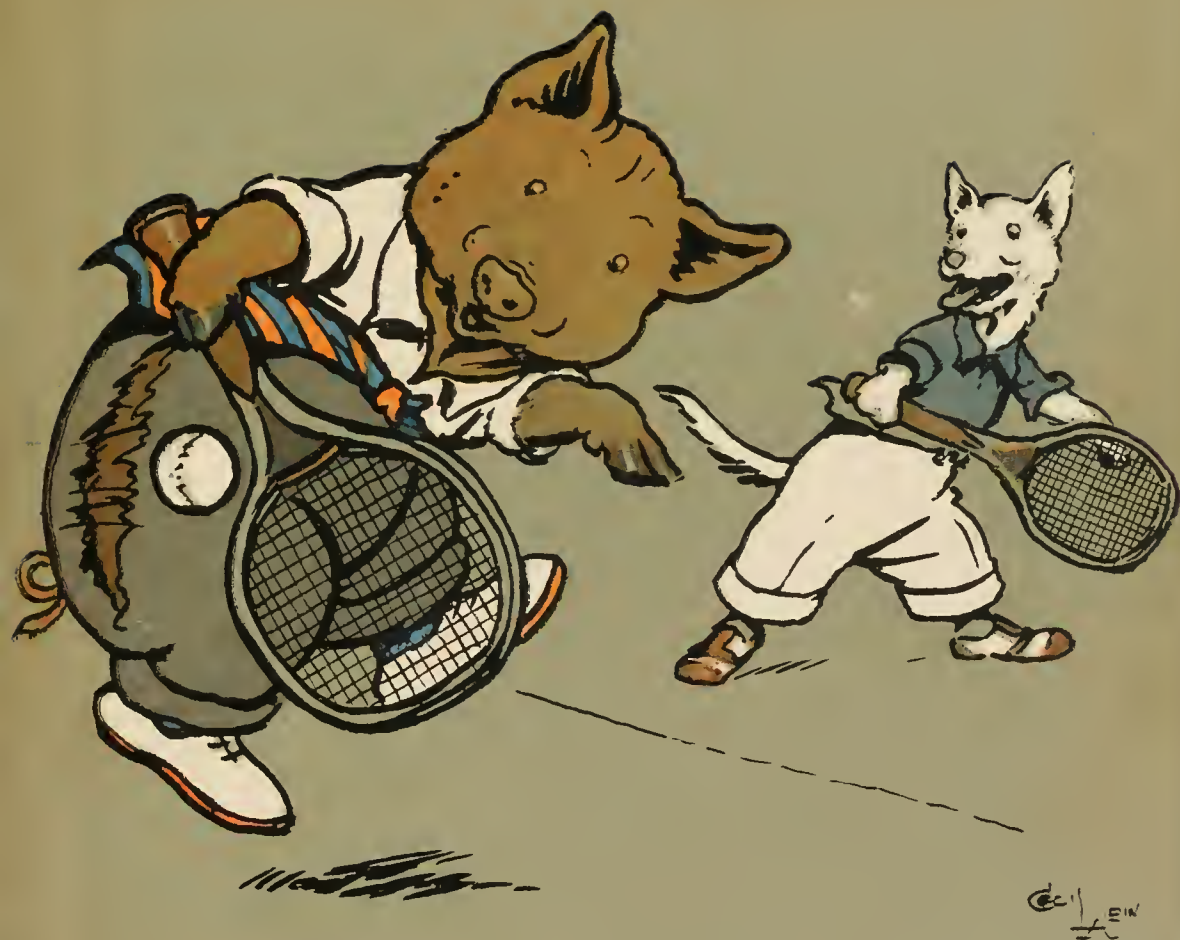
**FAULT!**



"PETER RETIRED TO THE TENTS"

But, getting in rather a flurried state ∞ with fixing his cummerbund neatly, ∞ Peter arrived at the party late, ∞ and he lost his head completely. ∞ He was dragged at once to the tennis-courts— ∞ no time to refuse or explain— ∞ and a whisper, “ Peter’s in footer shorts ! ” ∞ was heard from the Quacks, quite plain. ∞ Peter was burning with indignation— ∞ enough to make anyone burn ! ∞ He hit out wildly in desperation, ∞ and, taking an awkward return, ∞ he felt something giving a little bit— ∞ he heard two pistol-like cracks ; ∞ and the whole side seam of his trousers split ∞ amid deafening cheers from the Quacks. ∞ In a sad condition of tatters and rents, ∞ and splintery jags and tags, ∞ unhappy Peter retired to the tents, ∞ escorted in haste by Rags.







# PETER PATCHED



"ROLLED IT AS SMOOTH AS A PLATE"

But Tabitha, who, I forgot to mention, ♡ was sitting all cool in the shade, ♡ immediately gave him her kindest attention ; ♡ and a very good job she made ♡ of Peter's garments. For, neat and nimble, ♡ she borrowed another pair ♡ from Rags ; produced from her pocket a thimble, ♡ and let them out then and there. ♡ She did it so well, she did it so quick,— ♡ in a jiffy, or not much more,— ♡ that Peter appeared again, perfectly spick, ♡ and gave the young Quacks what-for ! ♡

Forager saw to the bowling-green, ♡ and rolled it as smooth as a plate. ♡ But after an hour, as no one had been, ♡ he thought he had better not wait. ♡ He came and sat by the lemonade, ♡ an excellent place to choose, ♡ and watched how splendidly Peter played, ♡ and talked of the latest news.





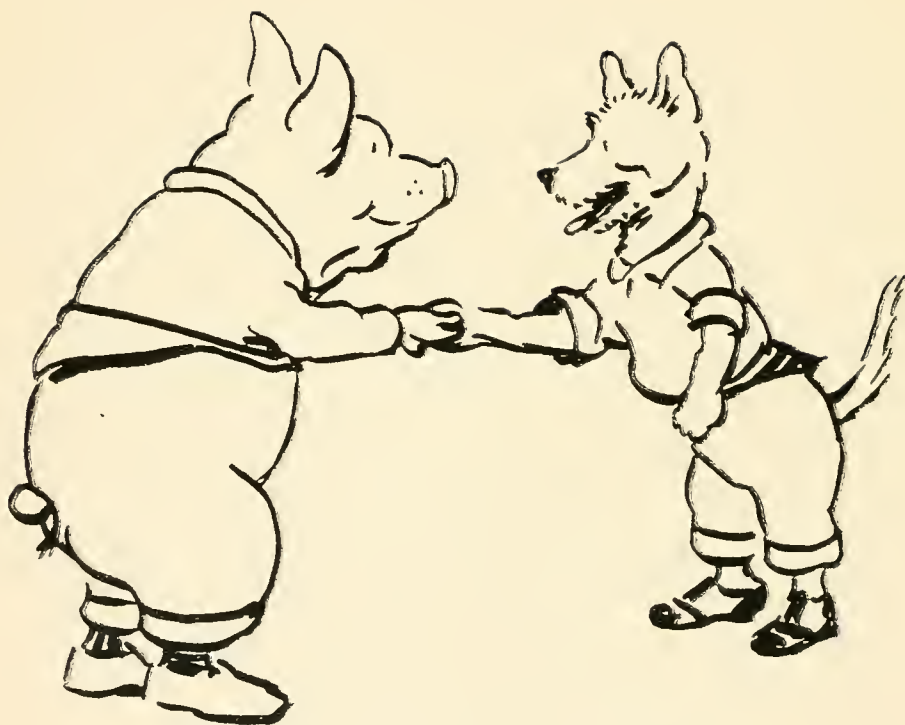




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# BREAKING=UP



"HANDSHAKES AND BOWS AND WAGS"

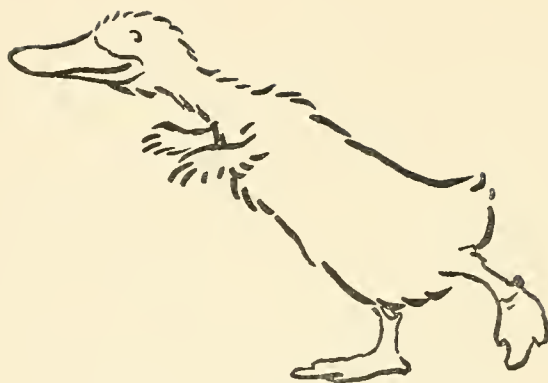
When the garden grew dusk, and the sun was low, ∞ and all the refreshments were done, ∞ the visitors said, “ I suppose we must go, ∞ but oh, it has been such fun ! ∞ Of all the parties we ever were at,” ∞ said each delighted guest, ∞ and Tabitha echoed from where she sat, ∞ “ Rags’ At Home is the best ! ” ∞ And the air was thick with grunts and purrs, ∞ and handshakes and bows and wags.

“ Good-night to you, Madam and Misses and Sirs ! ∞ I’m glad you were pleased ! ” said Rags.



GOOD-NIGHT

# PETER'S PREPARATIONS



"IF THEY CAN'T ALL SWIM, THEY MUST JUST  
LEARN HOW"

“PARTIES, it seems, are all the go,” ∞  
 said Master Quack to his brother Joe. ∞  
 “We’ll give a party ourselves, I vote. ∞ A  
 water-picnic, entirely afloat, ∞ would be  
 rather decent, and quite unique.” ∞ Joseph  
 replied in a joyful squeak, ∞ “Right oh !  
 But I say, look here, brother Jim, ∞ we  
 must only invite the folks that can swim.”  
 ∞ “Rubbish !” said James, as he wrinkled  
 his brow, ∞ “if they can’t all swim, they  
 must just learn how. ∞ Refreshments, all of  
 the nicest sorts, ∞ will be on the shore, and  
 aquatic sports ∞ upon the water. Come on !  
 let’s send ∞ an invitation to every friend !” ∞

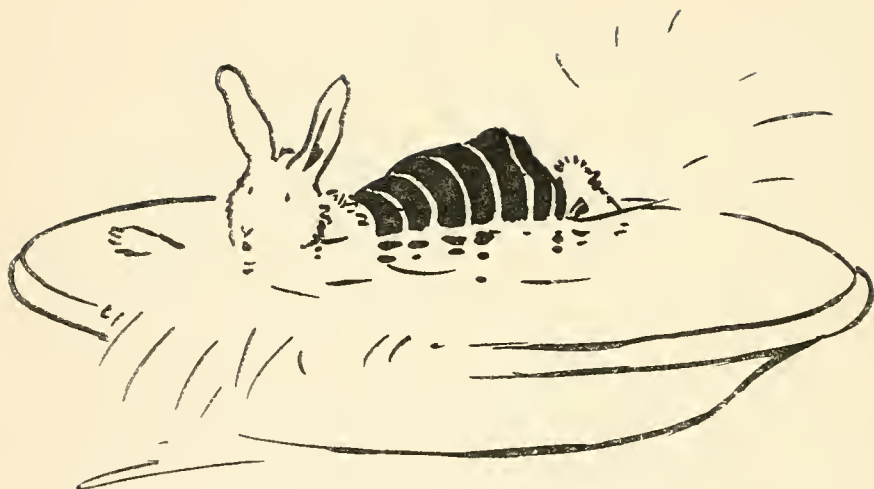
Peter was asked, and at once declared ∞  
 that if he went he should go prepared. ∞ His  
 mackintosh, brolly, and life-belt he wore. ∞  
 “Such things,” said he, “seem absurd

ashore ; ∞ but they're just the things when  
one's going to partake ∞ of the joys of a  
picnic on the lake."





# THE BATH BUNNIES



"THEY TOOK IT IN TURNS TO PRACTISE SWIMMING "

Humpty and Dumpty were ever so keen ∞ about the party ; they'd never been ∞ to a water-picnic. “ It's something quite new ; ∞ a jolly notion, I think, don't you ? ” ∞ they said to each other. “ But we must prepare ∞ ourselves at once for this fine affair ! ” ∞ So they filled the bath-tin till it was brimming, ∞ and took it in turns to practise swimming, ∞ in bathing suits of the latest cut. ∞ And they tried to practise some diving, but ∞ the bath-tin objected, and hit out madly, ∞ and Humpty's elbow was hurt rather badly.

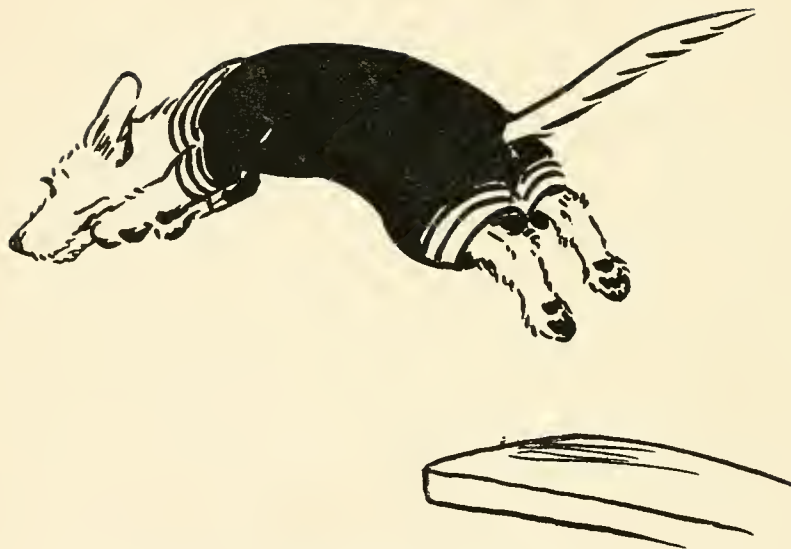




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# A LAND LADY



"RAGS ON THE SPRINGBOARD WAS SOMETHING GREAT!"

### III

Rags and Forager, as you might guess, ∞ looked very swagger in bathing dress. ∞ At diving and swimming they both were cracks, ∞ almost as good as the Master Quacks. ∞ Rags on the springboard was something great ! ∞ As for Tabitha,—well, she was late ∞ in sending an answer. When it came, ∞ neatly written and signed with her name, ∞ with a beautiful seal and a clean, new stamp, ∞ it said that she always avoided damp : ∞ it gave her bronchitis. However, said she, ∞ she'd be simply charmed to attend the tea ; ∞ and although the aquatic sports on the pond, ∞ as the Quacks would see, were a little beyond ∞ such a delicate lady, they'd like her, perhaps, ∞ to act as crowd,—do the cheers and claps.





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K. L. N.



**NO SAILOR BOLD**



"I REFUSE TO GO IN UNLESS MY LIFE-BELT  
IS ROUND MY BACK"

#### IV

The day was gloriously bright and sunny, ∞ when at last it came. No end of money ∞ had been spent by the Quacks, to have everything there, ∞ the programme of sports and the tea bill-of-fare, ∞ well arranged and exceedingly pleasant. ∞ Everyone who'd been asked was present, ∞ and they looked at the water with joy extreme, ∞ for it really was calm as Devonshire cream ! ∞ But Peter, well, he hadn't the pluck ∞ of a Humpty or Dumpty, much less of a duck. ∞ " I refuse to go in," he told Master Quack, ∞ " unless my life-belt is round my back. ∞ I won't run risks. I am not afraid, ∞ but my health insurance hasn't been paid ! "





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A. D. M.



# **WATER=LOGGED**



"PETER SAT THERE, WRAPPED IN HIS MACKINTOSH"

## V

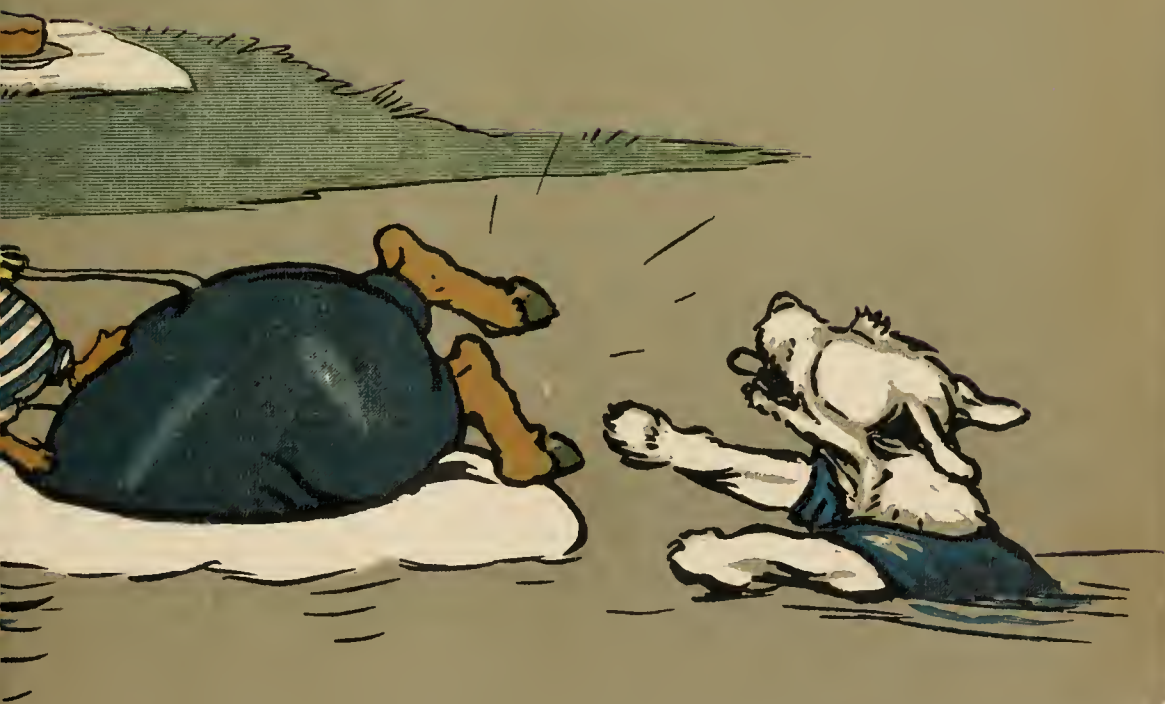
So the sports began ; and the very first race, ∞ amid great excitement, was taking place, ∞ and Tabitha cheering on the bank ∞ with Humpty and Dumpty, when—Peter sank ! ∞ The life-belt slipped, and next moment,—no wonder, — ∞ in half a twinkling Peter was under ! ∞

The Master Quacks immediately flew ∞ to the rescue—Rags and Forager too. ∞ But the rescue was very hard work, they found, ∞ and meanwhile Peter got nearly drowned. ∞ He had swallowed a gallon of water, before ∞ they managed to lug him up safe on shore. ∞ Peter, all dismal duckweed and slosh, ∞ sat there, wrapped in his mackintosh, ∞ while Humpty fed him with something sweet, ∞ and Tabitha rubbed his hands and feet. ∞ And the Quacks said, “ Too much life-belt about him. ∞ The sports had better go on without him.”











# GREAT SPORT



THE GREASY POLE

## VI

There isn't time to tell you the story  
of all that followed : such frolic and  
glory !— the water-polo, the greasy pole,  
the duck-hunt, the races,—the tea was the  
goal,— the marvellous swims and astonish-  
ing dives. They had never had so much  
fun in their lives ! And Tabitha cheered so  
long and loud, it sounded like an enormous  
crowd ! But when the very last sports were  
ended, the picnic happened—and that was  
splendid ! Everyone, as was only right, had  
a large and a healthy appetite. Oh !  
didn't they polish off cakes and tarts, and  
sandwiches too, with thankful hearts ! And  
even Peter recovered his speech when he saw  
the ices within his reach. “ Has our water-  
picnic been a success ? ” asked the Quacks.  
And the visitors yelled out “ YES ! ”



VERY SELECT



"HE PUT ON ALL HIS NICEST CLOTHES"

TABITHA was the busiest cat you ever yet did see. ∞ She was getting everything ready for her beautiful birthday tea. ∞ The guests, though there were only three, were very, very select—∞ Hungry Peter and Humpty and Dumpty. Of course, as you might expect, ∞ Peter accepted the invitation with great delight; for he said, ∞ “Oh ! won’t there be a spiffing feast ! a most splendiferous spread !” ∞ He put on all his nicest clothes, ever so spick and spruce, ∞ though he felt he might have eaten more if they’d been a bit more loose ; ∞ and, hoping he shouldn’t be quite the very earliest to arrive ∞ (but he was), he knocked at Tabitha’s door at just five minutes to five. ∞ And he tried to be very calm and polite, but could hardly hide his glee ∞ at the thought of all the lovely things he would have at Tabitha’s tea !







# CROCKERY AND CRUMPETS

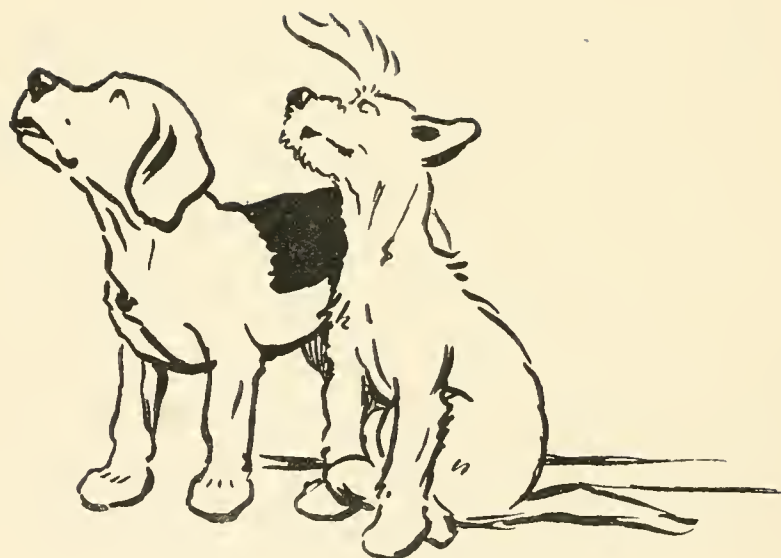


"HER BIGGEST PARTY TEA-POT"

Tabitha wasn't exactly ready—it gave her rather a shock, and made her hot and flustered, to hear Peter's knocketty-knock. For she only that minute had fetched her biggest party tea-pot out, and was rinsing it very carefully, because of the crack in the spout. And the cups and saucers—“Oh, dear, dear! what shall I do?” said she; “I thought I'd certainly five of them—and I can't find more than three! Extremely awkward!” said Tabitha. But nobody ever looked sweeter, and more at ease, as she opened the door, and said, “Welcome, dear Mr. Peter! How well you're looking! How pleased I am to think you were not prevented from coming!” Peter, all soaped, and brushed, and collared, and gloved, and scented, and gazed at the crumpets in the

fender. “ They mostly disagree,” ∞ thought Peter, “ but still, I do love crumpets. Hurrah for Tabitha’s tea ! ”

# OUT IN THE COLD



"THEY BOTH FELT VERY MUCH OUT IN THE COLD "

## III

Humpty and Dumpty, charmingly dressed, appeared a few minutes after. ∞ The room was full of the scent of tea, and the sound of chatter and laughter. ∞ Everyone was occupied with the very pleasing employment ∞ of eating all one possibly could, which, you know, is perfect enjoyment, ∞ when Rags and Forager happened to pass.

Now, they hadn't even been told ∞ of Tabitha's party: and so they both felt very much out in the cold. ∞ "Cakes!" said Forager, giving a sniff. "Scones!" said Rags with a snuff. ∞ "Crumpets, I think!" said both together, "but probably dreadfully tough!" ∞ "Give me a leg up, Forager," said Rags, "I want to see."

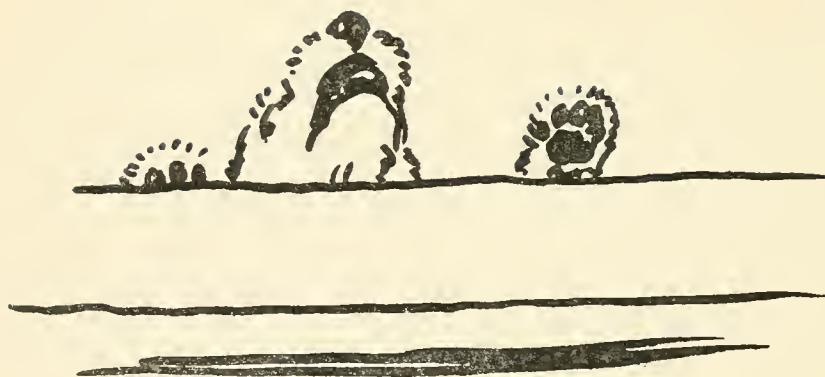
Oh! how he licked his quivering lips as he stared at Tabitha's tea!







# UPS AND DOWNS



"RAGS WENT SLITHERY—STAGGERY—SLIP"

## IV

But, of course, however good-natured one is, and anxious to help a friend, ∞ one cannot act as a bench, or a form, for at least ten minutes on end. ∞ While Rags was licking his lips, as we've said, and gurgling, "Crumpets ! Oh ! oh !" ∞ Forager got a trifle tired, and a good deal bored, below. ∞ So he first sat down—without due notice—perhaps it was rather rash, ∞ for Rags went slithery—staggering—slip, and then came down with a crash.

"Hush !" said Humpty and Dumpty, within, quite frightened, "what could that be ?" ∞ Peter said nothing : his mouth was much too full of Tabitha's tea.

"You idiot, Forager !" Rags exclaimed, "why couldn't you stand up straight ?" ∞ "All very well," said Forager, "but you

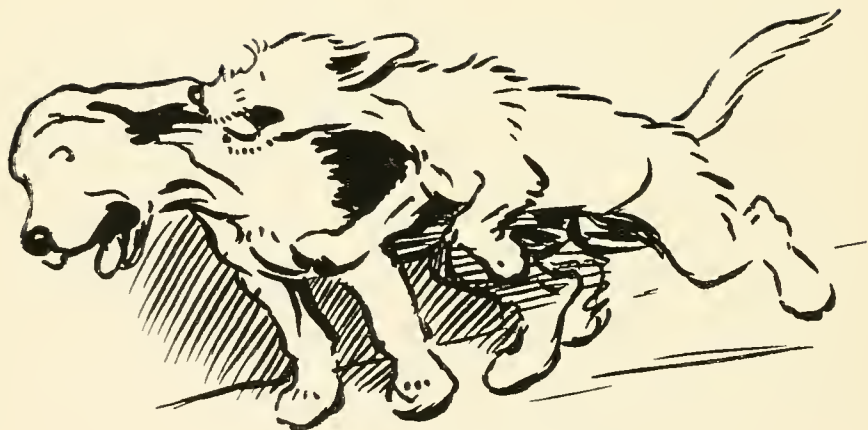
really are rather a weight. ∞ And I thought it my duty to let you down—you know, it's decidedly rude ∞ to glare through a lady's window at people having their food !”



CS1 ALBIN



# BARKS AND BITES



"HE SEIZED FAST HOLD OF FORAGER'S EAR"

Humpty, Dumpty, and Hungry Peter still were quite in the dark ∞ as to what had happened. They only heard a smothered sort of a bark ; ∞ and Tabitha said, as she helped the cake, “ It’s nothing at all, I think.” ∞ So they all began to talk again, and merrily eat and drink ; ∞ when, just in the midst of their joyful meal, there rose a great noise beneath ∞ the window, such a yapping, and snapping, and snarling, and gnashing of teeth ! ∞ For Rags, whose temper was shorter than short, was feeling exceedingly vexed, ∞ first, because he hadn’t been asked, and then with Forager next. ∞ And he seized fast hold of Forager’s ear, and yelled in an angry tone, ∞ “ Mind your own business, will you, stupid ! and leave my manners alone ! ”

Humpty, Dumpty, and Tabitha, all in a terrible fright, ∞ stood at the open window, shocked at this painful sight. ∞ But Peter (when he was able to speak) mumbled, “Oh, let 'em be. ∞ Don't let's waste time. Much better for us to attend to Tabitha's tea !”



Cecil  
LADIN











# PEACE AND PLENTY



"WHY WASN'T I ASKED?"

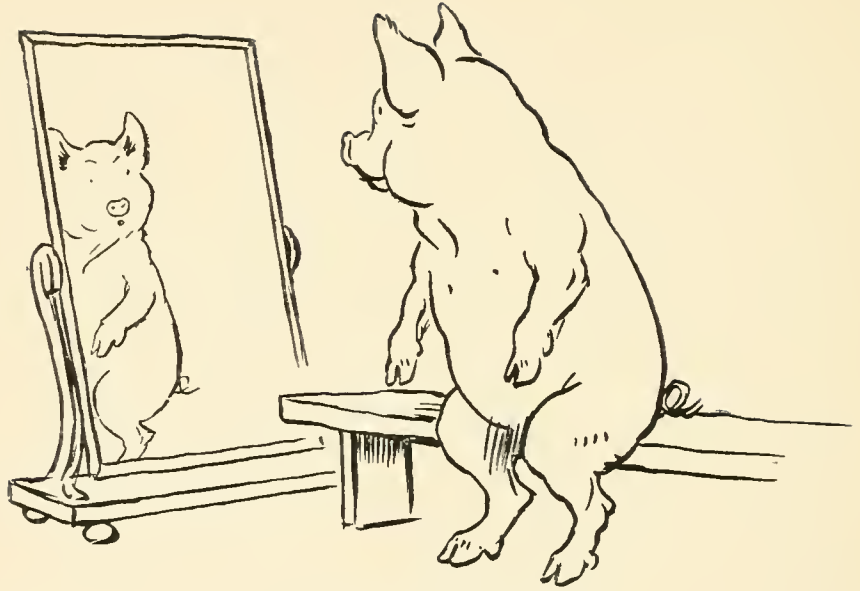
Meanwhile, Peter sat still and ate, till at last he really required ∞ not a single crumb or spoonful more ; and then, feeling ever so tired, ∞ he lay and snored on the sofa.

“ Dear me ! how glad I am ∞ that noise has stopped ! ” said Tabitha, as she opened some more plum jam.

“ Why wasn't I asked ? ” shrieked the voice of Rags in a rage ; and, lo and behold, ∞ there he was up at the window again ! Humpty and Dumpty turned cold. ∞ But Tabitha, who was very sensible, shut down the window tight. ∞ “ Now,” said she, “ that ill-behaved person can stare, if he likes, all night ! ∞ Come on, I've got some beautiful scones just ready, a quite fresh lot.” ∞ And she took them out of the oven, a plateful, all piping hot. ∞ When they'd finished the

tea at last, and the things were cleared away,  
∞ Peter awoke, and they had such fun, with  
every game they could play ! ∞ All's well  
that ends well, as you've heard ; and certainly  
nothing could be ∞ more jolly than the  
ending-up of Tabitha's birthday tea !

# **PETER PREPARES FOR THE PARTY**



" I KNOW I DON'T EAT ENOUGH "

“I’M really growing thinner,” said Peter with much distress. ∞ “My legs are like a spider’s ; my waist is very much less ∞ than it used to be. It’s hunger! I know I don’t eat enough. ∞ The things that I am given are always such tasteless stuff. ∞ I think I’ll study cooking,—I’ll teach myself how to make ∞ everything, from an omelet to a first-class wedding cake.” ∞ And, with this noble object, he studied by night and day, ∞ and he turned out splendid dishes in a quite remarkable way. ∞ And at last he declared with triumph, “I’ll give a big party now ! ∞ I’ll ask my friends to dinner, if it’s only to show them how ∞ that sort of thing should be managed !” So at once he made up his mind. ∞ He arranged the various courses, of the most expensive kind ; ∞ and he said, with

great satisfaction, “ Oh ! this will be simply fine ! ∞ At Hungry Peter’s party, I’ll teach ’em the way to dine ! ”



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ALDIN



# ROAST AND BOILED



"OH, DIDN'T HE JUMP AND FROLIC!"

He put on cap and apron, when the wonderful day came round. ∞ Oh, didn't he jump and frolic ! oh, didn't he caper and bound ! ∞ He chortled over the saucepans, he warbled over the pots, ∞ he sang as he washed the silver—of which he had lots and lots. ∞ And he hadn't a soul to help him ; but then there was never, you know, ∞ such a diligent person as Peter, when he made up his mind to go.

The pans were all on the simmer, the pots were just on the boil, ∞ the dinner hour was approaching, as Peter ended his toil. ∞ The pies and tarts in the oven were smelling extremely nice ; ∞ the puddings and coloured jellies, the trifle and strawberry ice, ∞ were much too lovely to tell you. And Peter now, having placed ∞ everything ready

for dishing, took one little tiny taste, ∞ to see if it all was perfect. “Ha ! ha !” said he with a smile, ∞ “they’ll see that Peter does things in a ship-shape and tip-top style !” ∞ But Rags and Forager sadly surveyed the back of his head. ∞ “Oh, bother ! why will he taste it ? It’s not a bit safe !” they said. ∞ “My goodness,” said Rags, “let’s stop him ! Quick, Forager, make some sign, ∞ or at Hungry Peter’s party we shan’t be able to dine.”





# RAGS IN MISCHIEF



"RAGS HAD SINGED HIS TAIL."

Then Peter stood at his mirror, and made himself dainty and spruce. ∞ At first he felt so excited, his fingers were not much use. ∞ But at last, growing somewhat cooler, he tackled his tie quite well ; ∞ and when he was dressed, I assure you he looked no end of a swell ! ∞ But just as the finishing touches were carefully being put, ∞ he noticed a terrible odour,—a mixture of feathers and soot.

“ Great Scott ; there is something burning ! Oh ! can the turkey have caught ? ∞ Oh ! can the cabinet pudding have boiled right over ? ” he thought. ∞ And he flew downstairs to the kitchen, turning first red, then pale, ∞ to find it was Rags who was scorching ; for Rags had singed his tail, ∞ by peeping into the oven to try and look at the

smell, & which every moment grew larger, and much more tempting as well.

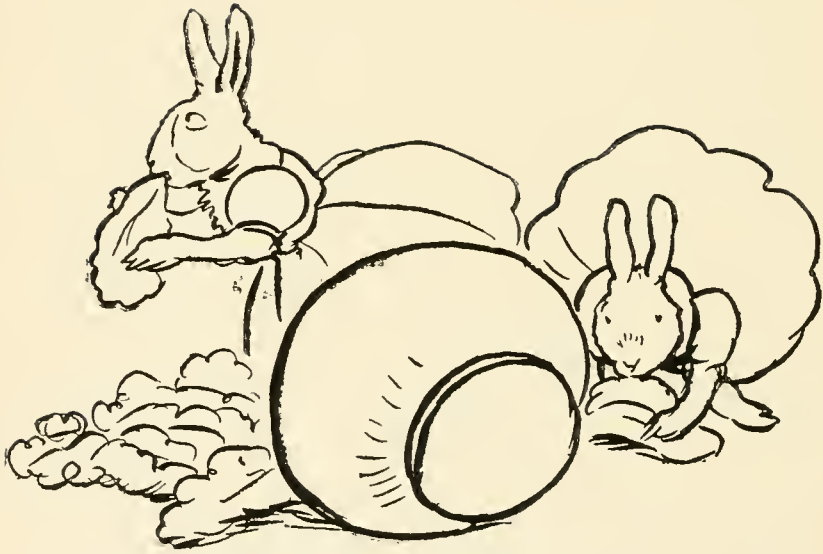
“Rags, you’ve no notion of manners,” said Peter very severely, & “opening the door of the oven—you’ve spoilt things, or very nearly. & Don’t you come meddling and muddling!—this dinner’s not yours, it’s mine, & and I’ve asked respectable people, not rude little curs, to dine!”



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# UNCONSIDERED TRIFLES



"THEY SPILLED THE SALAD SOMEHOW, BEFORE THEY SAT DOWN TO DINE"

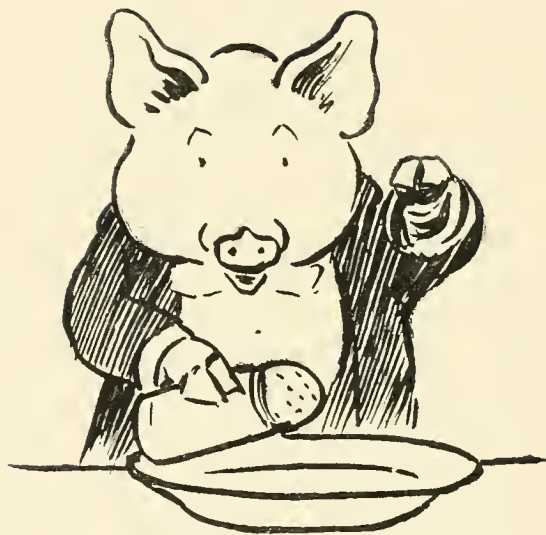
No sooner had Rags been mended, with vaseline and with haste, & than there came a rat-tat-tatting, and Peter eagerly raced & to let in Humpty and Dumpty. They both were delighted and much & surprised when they saw the table. He begged of them not to touch, & while he left them there for a moment—the dinner had to be dished. & But, of course, to be left alone there, however much they had wished & to be good and behave quite nicely, you know, it was rather trying. & The salad was on the side-board, and I fear there is no denying & that the salad was strangely smaller after a minute or two. & But I wouldn't say they had touched it—oh no, that never would do ! & Perhaps they were only admiring the side-board cloth design, & and they spilled the salad somehow, before they sat down to dine !







# UNCOMMON SCENTS



"WHY, IT'S CASTOR SUGAR!"

## V

But now the guests were arriving, got up in the latest style. ∞ The front door bell and the knocker were echoing all the while. ∞ The scents that came from the kitchen, as Tabitha said, made it seem ∞ (she always was sentimental) like a much-too-beautiful dream. ∞ Peter was in such spirits, he almost managed to make ∞ (but don't let out that I told you !) a most appalling mistake ! ∞ He was putting a taste of pepper in the soup—was just in the act,— ∞ when he said, “ Why, it's castor sugar ! ”—and it was, and that's a fact !



# HIGH LIVING



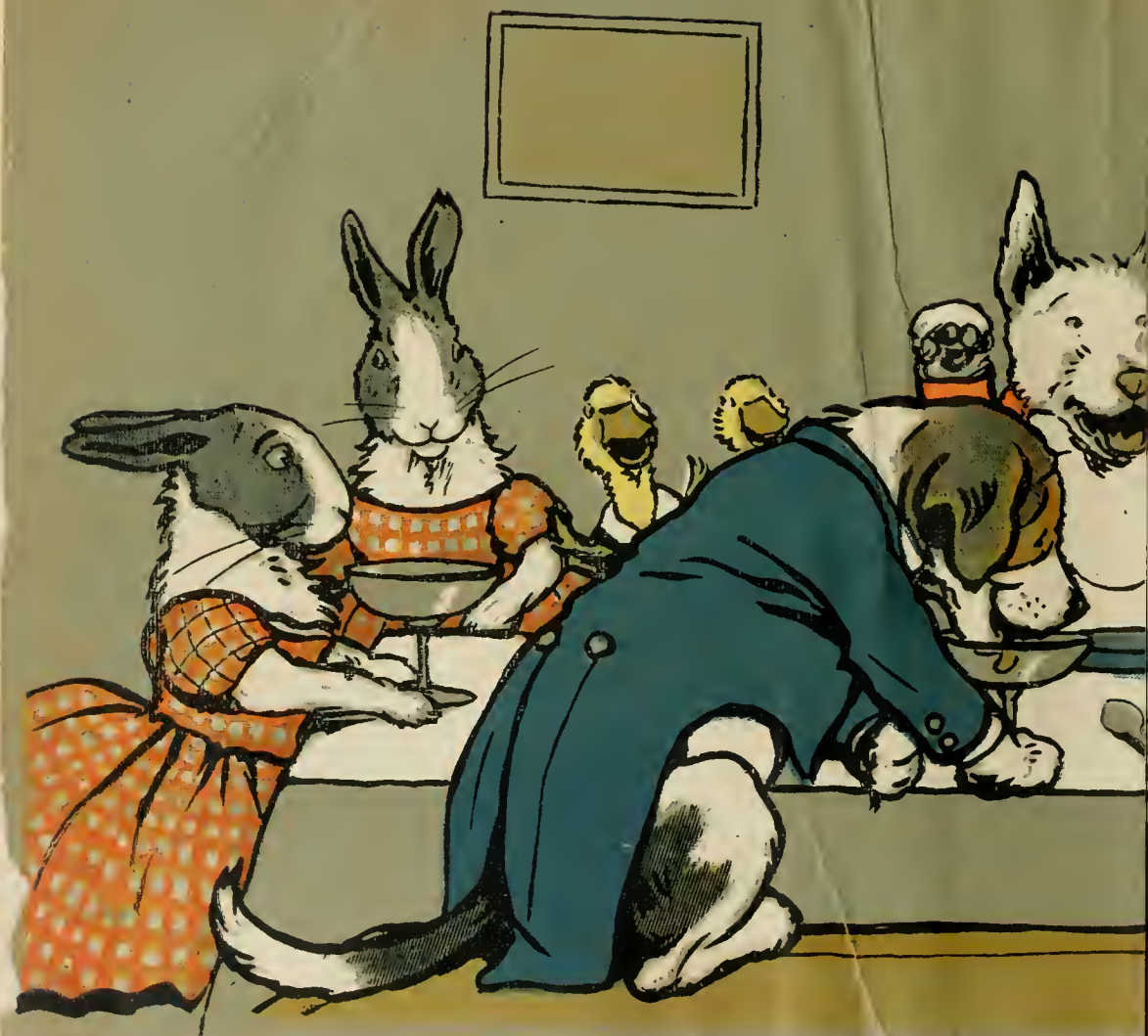
“ AS WE’RE ALL TEETOTAL, WE’LL DRINK THIS TOAST  
—IN THE SOUP ”

Well, Forager, Rags, the Humpties, Tabitha, and the Quacks, ∞ all sat down to the dinner, as prim and as stiff as wax. ∞ But they cheered as the dinner proceeded ; and they certainly cheered the most, ∞ when Peter, lifting his wine-glass, observed, “I propose a toast. ∞ Everyone’s health !” he shouted ; but his voice had a gentle droop ∞ while he said, “As we’re all teetotal, we’ll drink this toast—in the soup !”

Oh ! how they applauded Peter ! and how their eyes did shine ! ∞ The dinner had sixteen courses, so all is said in a line. ∞ But it only was right and proper, that being both host and cook, ∞ Peter was perfectly stunning in the number of things he took. ∞ There wasn’t a single dish there he could bring himself to decline. ∞ I tell you, at Peter’s party, he showed ’em the way to dine !











**JUST FANCY!**



“ A HORSEY GENTLEMAN—THAT’S MY LINE ”

HUMPTY and Dumpty, when they had thought ∞ for weeks and weeks, decided they ought ∞ to give a party. They were, as you know, ∞ so very shy, and it frightened them so ∞ whenever they faced a lot of folk : ∞ they simply blushed whenever they spoke. ∞ But now they said, “Though our friends are all ∞ much more important, and large, and tall, ∞ than we, yet they all are exceedingly kind ; ∞ and it’s certain they each will be inclined ∞ to make our party a big success. ∞ Let’s have a ball, then,—in fancy dress.”

So they sent out cards to the neighbours all, ∞ inviting them to “a modest ball,”— ∞ that’s what they said ; and on top of the cards ∞ they put “Just fancy !” and “Kind regards.” ∞ Rags, in a moment, or even

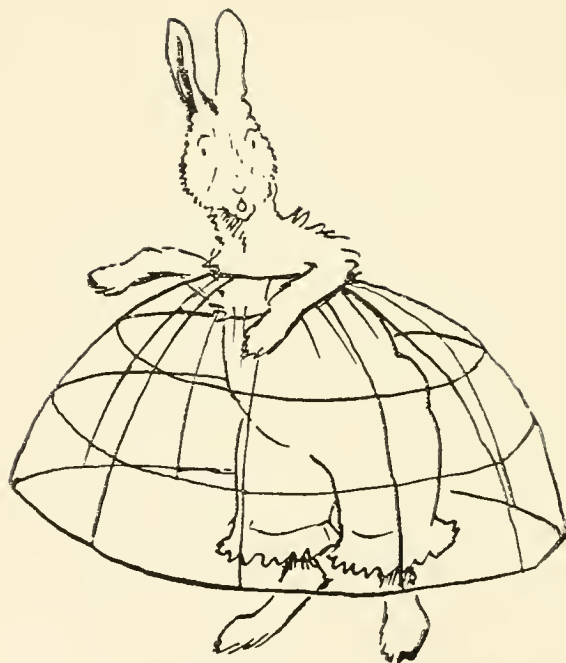
less, ∞ had made up his mind how he would dress. ∞ “A horsey gentleman—that’s my line,” ∞ he said to Forager, “won’t it be fine? ∞ A spotted tie, and a smart check tweed, ∞ I flatter myself, will look well indeed. ∞ Gaiters and swagger cane and pin : ∞ I’ll do it thoroughly once I begin !”





01

# THE EARLY VICTORIANS



"THE CRINOLINES WERE SO SILLY!"

The hostesses found it a difficult task ∞ to decide their clothes. So they went to ask ∞ Tabitha for some useful advice. ∞ “Oh,” she told them, “you’d look so nice ∞ in Early Victorian fashions, my pets. ∞ Crinolines, dears, and pantalettes ; ∞ coal-scuttle bonnets and sandalled shoes.” ∞ “What a lovely notion,” they said, “to choose !” ∞ And they worked like mad, with sewing machines, ∞ at dimities and at bombazines, ∞ with yards of wire for the crinolines, ∞ and bonnet-trimmings in emerald greens. ∞ The pantalettes, all snowy and frilly, ∞ were sweet ; but the crinolines were so silly ! ∞ Humpty and Dumpty grew dreadfully flustered ∞ putting them on, and hot as mustard. ∞ “It feels,” said Humpty, “as if one had got ∞ by accident into a lobster-pot !” ∞ “No,

that's just fancy !” Dumpty replied, ∞ as she finally squeezed her sister inside. ∞ They also bought Early Victorian shawls. ∞ You do spend money for fancy dress balls !



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# TABITHA'S TASTEFUL ATTIRE



"A WOLF THAT WENT WITH WHEELS AND A STRING"

Tabitha wouldn't let anyone know ∞ in what costume she intended to go. ∞ But she meant to appear as something quite good : ∞ what do you think ?—Red Riding Hood ! ∞ Scarlet cloak, and apron of white, ∞ she really was the most charming sight, ∞ with a basket—really a life-like thing,— ∞ and a wolf that went with wheels and a string. ∞ Before the looking-glass, every night, ∞ she practised till she was satisfied quite. ∞ “Just fancy !” she said to herself, “not one ∞ will think of doing as I have done ! ∞ How they will stare, and how they will call, ∞ when Little Red Riding Hood comes to the ball !”







# A TIGHT FIT



"THEY FIT TOO WELL, DO THESE PAGE'S CLOTHES "

IV

But Peter's plan, it was quainter yet. ∞ By hook or crook he managed to get ∞ a page's suit of an old-fashioned sort,— ∞ very tight breeches and coat very short ; ∞ a small silk hat on the top of his head, ∞ and a bun in his hand. "Look here," he said ∞ to Forager, "what do you think of that?" ∞ "Well, Peter, you look a trifle fat," said Forager, trying to be polite. ∞ "Good !" exclaimed Peter, "first guess right ! ∞ The Fat Boy in 'Pickwick,'—that's what you see. ∞ It's an eating part, and will just suit me. ∞ I doze and I eat,—I eat and I doze,— ∞ though they fit too well, do these page's clothes. ∞ It's a fine idea !" chuckled Peter, swelling ∞ with pride. "What are you ?"— "Oh, well, that's telling !" ∞ said Forager, and he gave a wink. ∞ "But I rather imagine

you'll see me in pink. ∞ If I can't do a hop,  
I'll do a crawl ∞ in pink, at the Humpties'  
fancy dress ball."



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# A TIP=TOP AFFAIR

T



MASTER QUACK AS MADAME PAVLOVA THE RUSSIAN DANCER

“My goodness me !”—so Humpty said,  
∞ as she very cautiously poked out her head,  
∞ and saw the guests as they made their  
approach ∞ in waggon and wheelbarrow,  
carriage and coach. ∞ “My goodness me !  
Oh ! Dumpty, do look !” ∞ And, perfectly  
breathless, both of them took, ∞ in turns, a  
bit of a squint behind ∞ the chink between  
curtain and window-blind.

For there was Rags, in his sporty costume,  
∞ a kind of blend of a lord and a groom ;  
∞ there was Peter, in blue and white,— ∞  
fat is no word for that wonderful sight ! ∞  
There were the Quacks, who could not be  
beaten ∞ for marvellous fancies, one in an  
Eton ; ∞ the other said, when pressed for  
an answer, ∞ he was Madame Pavlova, the  
Russian dancer. ∞ And Tabitha, who (as she

knew she would), ∞ caused shrieks of surprise as Red Riding Hood. ∞ And Forager last, big, bluff, and blunt, ∞ in the gorgeous dress of the Heathshire Hunt. ∞ Never was seen, no, never before, ∞ such a troop as entered the Humpties' door.

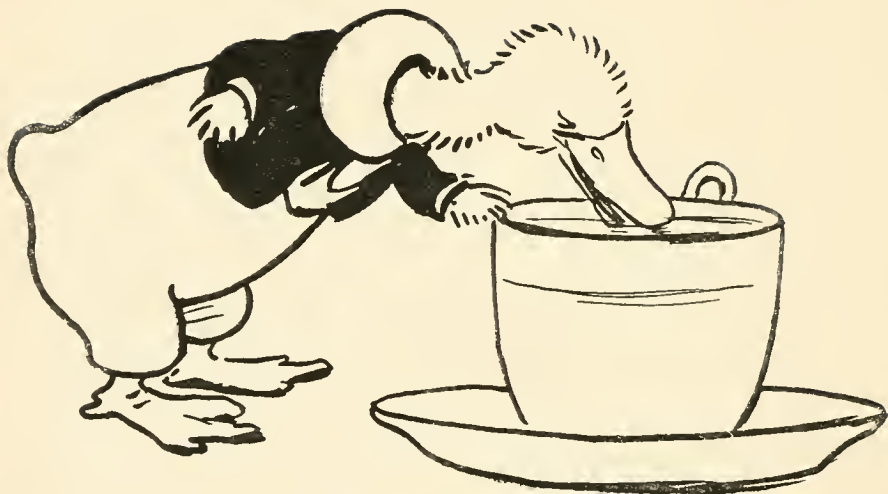








# THE BELLE OF THE BALL



"REFRESHMENTS WERE SERVED WHENEVER ONE CHOSE"

## VI

The ball was all that could be desired. ∞ The Humpties, at great expense, had hired ∞ a huge and magnificent gramophone ∞ (having no piano as yet of their own). ∞ So the music was fine. They had got an immense ∞ rich supper (also at great expense), ∞ and refreshments were served whenever one chose,— ∞ bovril and coffee and things like those. ∞ And the dancing—really there never was such ! ∞ Some said Peter had eaten too much, ∞ and they hinted his Fat Boy looked too fat ; ∞ but he waltzed divinely in spite of that. ∞ But as for Tabitha, great and small ∞ said she was the belle of the fancy dress ball !

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